



ART INTEGRATED LEARNING: AN INNOVATIVE AND INCLUSIVE APPROACH TO EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Background: Art-integrated learning is an inventive and constructivist learning approach through which students illustrate, experiment & demonstrate the concept through various art forms. Art integration into the curriculum implies exploring academic contents (facts, ideas, concepts, processes, methods and skill sets to be acquired by a student through the spectacles of various forms of art. Instead of teaching art as a separate subject, teachers are using dance, drama, music, visual arts etc to teach a variety of academic subjects in a more engaging way. A 360-degree holistic learning is possible in classrooms by integrating various academic concepts with arts. Cognitive domains along with socio-emotional, behavioural, psychomotor domain development could be targeted using this. The paper attempts to look at 'Arts' as a pedagogical tool and its impact on a child's overall learning and development. The importance of an Art Integrated Learning method is that it promotes inclusivity in the classroom while also serving as a facilitator/educator in developing inclusivity.

KEYWORDS: Inclusivity, Classroom, Art Integrated Learning, Individual Differences, Cheerful, Facilitator.

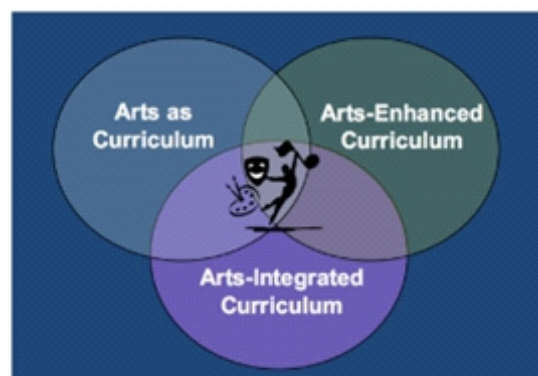
INTRODUCTION

The dictionary meaning of integration is, 'the act of combining or adding parts to make a unified whole'. Thus, art integration means 'combining arts with the teaching of different curricular areas.' Subjects such as the languages, social studies, sciences and mathematics can be made to correlate with art. Sometimes, arts can clarify science concepts with ease. Thus, the abstract concepts within the subjects can be concretised using different art forms. Learning in this way helps to increase knowledge and understanding of the subject area, and also fosters a greater appreciation of arts. This is what is called holistic or complete learning. Art provides a language for expression. This expression can be visual or in the form of a performance.

Art Integrated Learning (AIL) is a framework of experiential learning which provides an equitable learning environment for all learners through their own access points. Students engage in art activities and construct personal meaning through their learning in an art integrated environment. AIL was envisaged as pedagogy applicable to all levels of school education with the objective of developing the target areas of cognitive, socio-emotional and psychomotor domains of the learner. At multiple levels of the teaching-learning process, Art integrated learning has opened spaces for the existence of a learning that is both inter-disciplinary and holistic in nature. Prior to its implementation as a pedagogical tool, the framework has been field- tested at different schools across the country for its viability and efficacy in making the teaching-learning process meaningful and joyful. The ensuing results and feedback from various stakeholders (which include teachers, authorities and parents) have been extremely positive and overwhelming. The pedagogy of AIL has been made part of NISHTHA (National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement), an initiative of Department of School Education & Literacy, MHRD, to prepare teachers of elementary classes for holistic and competency based teaching. To ensure the smooth implementation of this mega capacity building program, of which AIL is a training module, this guideline shall be crucial in hand-holding of our teachers and also guide them in this process. These guidelines are meant to apprise all our stakeholders of school education with Art Integrated Learning as pedagogy and its innate relevance to education. It systematically explains all aspects of the innovative pedagogy of Art Integrated Learning: if followed in true spirit, they can help create vibrant AIL classrooms where we can hear the students singing, or see them dancing, acting, and creating works of art—all in ways that reflect a growing understanding of their core scholastic concepts.

The arts find their way in to elementary, middle, and high school classrooms every day in a variety of ways. The variations can be distilled into three main categories.

- Arts as Curriculum
- Arts-Enhanced Curriculum
- Arts-Integrated Curriculum



All three variations are important, needed, and valid. All benefit from being supported by arts experiences—where students attend performances and exhibits by professional artists to engage in authentic experiences that deepen and broaden their arts understandings.

While the three variations naturally link and support each other, there are reasons why teachers and schools target one or more approaches. Understanding the differences in the approaches can help teachers and schools make informed choices about the programs they offer.

Art as Curriculum

If a school has a music, art, drama, or dance teacher, their approach is most likely and primarily Arts as Curriculum. Students develop knowledge and skills in a particular art form. Often referred to as “arts learning” or “art for art's sake,” the programs are guided by national, state, or local standards for each of the art forms. For example, in visual arts, students learn the content, processes, and techniques for two- or three-dimensional work. They learn how the visual arts developed and changed throughout history, and engage in creating and analyzing works created in a variety of media.

Arts-Enhanced Curriculum

When the arts are used as a device or strategy to support other curriculum areas, but no objectives in the art form are explicit, then the approach is called Arts-Enhanced Curriculum. For example, students sing the ABCs as a means to other ends—remembering the letters and sequence of the alphabet. However, students are not usually expected to learn about melody, song structure, or develop specific singing skills.

Arts-Enhanced Curriculum acts as a “hook” to engage students in learning content. Additionally, teachers need little or no training in the art form. Arts-Enhanced Curriculum is often mistaken for Arts-Integrated Curriculum or a distinction is not made between the two.

Arts-Integrated Curriculum

In Arts-Integrated Curriculum, the arts become the approach to teaching and the vehicle for learning. Students meet dual learning objectives when they engage in

the creative process to explore connections between an art form and another subject area to gain greater understanding in both. For example, students meet objectives in theater (characterization, stage composition, action, expression) and in social studies. The experience is mutually reinforcing—creating a dramatization provides an authentic context for students to learn more about the social studies content and as students delve deeper into the social studies content their growing understandings impact their dramatizations. For Arts-Integrated Curriculum to result in deep student understanding in both the art form and the other curriculum area, it requires that teachers engage in professional development to learn about arts standards and how to connect the arts to the curriculum they teach.

Need of Art Integrated Learning

Integrating arts into the subjects brings not only brings joy but also makes the learners active which eventually leads to the development of 21st-century skills. Creativity and innovation utilized in the artistic process compel children to think creatively & help these skills come more naturally in real life or in the future workplace. Teaching Learning Materials, Lesson plans, School excellence kits etc., promote art-integrated learning. Let's look at the various advantages of art-integrated classrooms.

Learners who participate in art integrated classes demonstrate longer retention and articulate deeper meaning in the concepts taught in the classroom. Which helps in deeper understanding and long retention. When the learners are involved in art integrated projects they tend to become personal to the learners, making it more respectful, creative & meaningful work. Thus it provides authentic and personally meaningful learning. Art integration builds an environment of Cooperation, Collaboration, and Confidence which fosters a true 'one class...one team' feeling among students. Students cooperate better with one another and recognize the strengths of their peers by working with one another so it also builds cooperation, collaboration, and confidence in the learner. The arts-integrated lessons create a room for self-expression & self-awareness. Learners get a chance to imagine, create, and move while taking lessons. During the art-integrated classes, learners can express what they have learned in various subjects through different art forms, whether it is theatre/role play or studying a painting or writing a poem, art-integrations truly gives students a sense of ownership of their work and love for what they have created. thus creating a sense of ownership.

As mentioned in the page 12 para 4.6 of NEP 2020:

In all stages, experiential learning will be adopted, including hands-on learning, arts-integrated and sports-integrated education, story-telling-based pedagogy, among others, as standard pedagogy within each subject, and with explorations of relations among different subjects. To close the gap in achievement of learning outcomes, classroom transactions will shift, towards competency-based learning and education. The assessment tools (including assessment "as", "of", and "for" learning) will also be aligned with the learning outcomes, capabilities, and dispositions as specified for each subject of a given class.

Significance of Art Integrated Learning in Nurturing Inclusivity in Schools

Significance of Art Integrated Learning in Nurturing Inclusivity in Classroom Gardner (1990) [9] stated, "Individuals do not develop simply by existing, or growing older, or turning into larger; they must undergo certain pivotal experiences that lead to periodic reorganizations of their knowledge and understanding" (p. 3). This includes students with disabilities. Instead of lecturing educators on why inclusive practices are necessary for all students, creating a schoolwide project that incorporates the arts is a more effective way of demonstrating how to promote inclusive education and allow students to benefit from the rich learning experience achieved via participation in arts-related activities. The arts are fun, engaging, educational, and naturally inclusive. According to Gardner (1990) [9]: "...when students are themselves engaged in rich and engaging projects, which call upon a variety of modes of representation; when they have the opportunity to interact and communicate with individuals these are the settings that allow for proper alignment of the various kinds of information by those who demonstrate complimentary types of learning. (p. 31-32) Gardner (1994) [10] also wrote, "Because the arts give a natural means for men to act and to speak, they can reveal important and elusive knowledge regarding the experiences and subjective life of others" (p. 349). Additionally, there is no right or wrong path to participate in the arts, and because of this, every individual is equally able to contribute to the production of the arts. For example, when integrated into the syllabus, dance and movement permit students to use their minds and bodies, and change them to creatively communicate their thoughts, ideas, and contributions to a lesson; the visual arts help to engage students' problem solving and critical thinking skills, aid in fine motor development, and, along with dance, can help promote prosocial behaviors when working cooperatively; and music is a way to help students maintain a calm and relaxed state, become engrossed and focused on the task at hand, and create an enjoyable atmosphere. The arts enable all students to participate in and contribute to a lesson, promote creative skills and abilities, and allow educators to see how every student can contribute to the activity. Furthermore, the arts support learning in numerous ways. Gardner (1994) [10] described how the arts provide "pure pleasure" (p. 21) for children through their "therapeutic qualities" (p. 346). Valentino (2016) [28] also stated that including visual and performing

arts into lessons is successful in ensuring that all students have an equal opportunity to enjoy, participate in, and benefit from the inclusive classroom environment and the arts. Supporting different pupils in a general education classroom necessitates knowledge of how the brain functions. Different types of art can also help to foster inclusiveness in the classroom. Arts enables all students to participate in and contribute to a lesson, while also promoting creative abilities and talents and allowing educators to assess how each student can contribute to the activity.

Role of Teachers in Nurturing Inclusivity in Classroom through Art Integrated Learning Approach

Role of Facilitator/Educator in Nurturing Inclusivity in Classroom through Art Integrated Learning Approach According to Stainback and Stainback (1996) [25], Vandercook and York (1990) [29], Thousand and Villa (2000) [30], Weiner (2002) [31] The involvement of students, educators, specialists, administrators, parents, and community members, all working together in a team, is a significant key to the success of inclusion. A booming Art Integrated classroom is dependent on the educator's efforts to integrate arts with the other subjects. In an Art Integrated classroom, the educator is predicted to play the role of a mentor; guide, and facilitator of students who helps facilitate the learning process by desegregation different types of art relating to the subject topic. However, most of the educators have to lack correct knowledge of how to integrate various art forms with the topic by emphasizing inclusion and learning outcomes at a time. There are some important considerations to keep in mind while applying the Art Integrated Learning approach in the classroom to foster inclusivity: 1. A comprehensive approach to learning 2. Aesthetic encounters 3. Ability to switch back and forth between nonverbal and verbal communication 4. The ability to see the similarities and differences between different arts. 5. Artistic reinforcement in integration 6. Using integrated learning to empower students 7. Encouraging others to think about things differently. 8. Creating an environment in which all opinions are welcomed 9. Providing youngsters with decision-making opportunities 10. Identifying each child's unique strength 11. Encouraging children to collaborate and work together while simultaneously working independently 12. Every day of learning should be filled with fun, laughter, and new experiments and experiences. 13. Provide opportunities for students to role-play. 14. Allow kids to sketch and name their thoughts, ideas, and feelings to express themselves. 15. Encourage the use of art-related vocabulary.

CONCLUSION

Art integration is the use of art in other academic subjects in order to promote learning. It is a way of using art to teach non-art concepts and skills. When art is integrated into other subjects, it can help students to better understand the material and retain information. Art integration can also be used to teach concepts that are not easily learned through traditional methods. Art integration can take many forms. It can be as simple as using a painting to help explain a concept in history or using music to help teach a math lesson. There are many resources available to teachers who want to incorporate art into their classrooms. There are also organizations that provide training and support for teachers interested in using art integration.

Using different art forms enables teaching abstract concepts with much ease and interest. Art integration learning helps in the quicker understanding of the topic and also increases the retention capacity of the students. Learning through arts caters to different students possessing different skills of intelligence -- naturalistic, spatial, visual, musical, kinesthetic, etc. This will drive a holistic approach and the overall development of students.

Art Education enables students to develop an appreciation of art. Art education is generally the process of encouraging sensorial explorations involving artistic and creative expression, such as music, drawing, painting, singing, theatre, etc. This can be either scholastic or co-scholastic. It enables students to work with their ideas, and materials in a non-verbal form. In art integration, the various art forms become the centre of the curriculum. It breaks the monotony of teaching, and makes the class interactive and conducive to learning.

in this approach the learning is more demonstrative in nature, it creates an eagerness to learn, enables students to become more independent and develops 21st-century skills such as expression, creativity, critical thinking, reasoning, problem-solving and collaboration, etc. It leads to the development of leadership, teamwork and competency skills in students allowing them to relate to real-world problems or situations. It provides an equitable learning environment for all learners. Every child may not be able to express themselves in the way we want. They can use art in their learning. Every occupation we pursue has the application of art as well as core subject concepts. Be it designing, technical drawing or architecture, marketing and advertisement, or even entrepreneurship, arts experiences boost critical thinking. So it's time children are given the freedom to learn in the best way that suits them.

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